in Brunei Darussalam back-to-back with the ASEAN-India Dialogue SOM.

Cooperation between the three countries shall be supportive and complementary to BIMSTEC, Mekong—Ganga Cooperation as well as ASEAN-India Dialogue.

Promotion of SCs/STs at higher level of bureaucracy

*633. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the last five decades the proportion of SCs and STs has gone up to some extent only in Group C and D services and not in the higher bureaucracy;

(b) whether since 1996, several obstacles have cropped-up with regard to filling-up of posts reserved for SCs and STs in the form of several judgements of the Supreme Court; and

(c) whether the Department of Personnel and Training has issued several Memoranda to implement orders of the Supreme Court, going beyond the mandate of the Court while amending the promotion rules to the disadvantage of the SCs and STs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No Sir. Representation of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in services has increased in all the Groups *viz.* A, B, C and D.

(b) Some judgements of the Supreme Court affected the interests of the SCs and STs adversely in the matter of recruitment and in promotions. These obstacles have, however, been removed by the 81st, 82nd and 85th amendments to the Constitution.

(c) No, Sir.